

Mississippi HSEES 2004 Prevention Outreach Activities Plan

Activity One

Name of Activity Identify and convene a group of agencies/organizations to form the Mississippi Environmental Hazards Network (EHN) to address issues related to hazardous substances emergency events.

Target Group Emergency responders and/or reporting sources

Type of Prevention Awareness

Justification Maintaining and improving the quantity and quality of data reported to MS HSEES has become increasingly important in light of the numerous environmental and health concerns involved, along with the real possibility of terrorist activity. The EHN will be established to improve interagency communications, work to standardize reporting elements, and to assist in evaluating current **legislation** / regulation / policy issues related to hazardous substances.

Detailed Description of Activity The EHN will physically meet at least twice during 2004. For the first meeting, a presentation will be developed to explain HSEES' purpose and the protocol followed. This presentation will also include examples of MSDH policy/regulations and state laws related to HSEES and participants will discuss the need for revised and/or new policies or legislation. Between meetings, the MS HSEES will communicate with other EHN members to gain their input. Reporting guidelines / procedures / methods currently differ widely among agencies. The EHN's two major tasks will be to 1) assess current reporting methods related to hazardous substances emergency events and develop a more standardized reporting format (based upon the HSEES questionnaire due to its thoroughness), and 2) review Mississippi's current legislation / policies / regulations related to hazardous substances (compared to other participating HSEES states) and provide recommendations for improvement.

Collaborators Currently, the MS HSEES receives reports from the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, the Mississippi Bureau of Narcotics, the Poison Control Center, the National Response Center and the US Department of Transportation's Hazardous Materials Incident System (HMIS). The State entities will be invited to participate in the EHN. There are several other agencies / organizations that do not currently report to MS HSEES that will also be invited to participate in the EHN, including: the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce – Bureau of Plant Industry / Pesticide Program, the Mississippi Branch of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Mississippi Highway Patrol, the Mississippi State Department of Health – Office of Emergency Planning and Response / Bioterrorism Preparedness Program, the Mississippi Department of Insurance – Fire Services Division, and the Mississippi Department of Transportation / Law Enforcement Division.

Effectiveness Measure / Date of Completion

- By April 30, 2004, EHN participants will complete an evaluation form rating the effectiveness of their first meeting and the presentation given from one (not effective) to five (highly effective). An overall rating of three out of five will constitute effectiveness in this activity.
- By August 31, 2004, the EHN will have produced a more standardized reporting format across agencies / organizations as evidenced by a draft report form. Using a standardized reporting format should improve the completeness of reports received by 10% within six months of implementation.
- By December 31, 2004, the EHN will have developed a report of current **legislation** / regulations / policies related to hazardous substances in Mississippi, including recommendations to agencies and to State policymakers on new and/or amended items. This activity will be considered successful if at least 10% of the EHN's member agencies / organizations (or the MS Legislature) begin to revise or develop new **legislation** / regulations / policies related to hazardous substances within six months of reviewing EHN recommendations.
- Within six months of instituting the standardized reporting format, document a 10% increase in events reported.

Activity Two

Name of Activity Collaborate with MSDH Office of Health Communication / Public Relations' website coordinator in developing a new MS HSEES website that is more user-friendly and provides more useful information.

Target Group General Public and other Internet users

Type of Prevention Awareness

Justification The Internet is an ideal source of information for an increasing number of people. The general public, media, industry representatives and first responders all use it to educate themselves on many things.

Detailed Description of the Activity The main purpose of the MS HSEES website will be to inform interested parties about the MS HSEES program and its results. Other purposes will be to provide access to HSEES data and contact information.

The MS HSEES website needs to be recreated to include current and past outreach activities, HSEES event information/statistics, current contact information, and reporting guidelines. Other things that will be included will be ATSDR's informational pamphlet about HSEES, along with links to other HSEES state programs and pertinent government and private agencies.

Prior to deploying the website, the HSEES Coordinator will send notices to interested parties to alert them to the site's availability.

Collaborators MSDH Office of Health Communications/ Public Relations

Measure of Effectiveness

- A "hit" counter will track the number of times the site is accessed per month.
- An e-mail survey of potential website users will be conducted after the website has been accessible for three months to determine its usefulness. Potential users will include EMA, MSDEQ, MSDH, other state's HSEES programs, ATSDR staff, and industry representatives. A response rate of 30% will be considered adequate for determining the website's usefulness.
- Within six months of the website's deployment, document a 5% increase in events reported.

Date of Completion April 30, 2004

Activity Three

Name of Activity Develop and distribute an annual newsletter (MSDH's Hazardous Substance Spotlight) for the HSEES program.

Target Group Emergency Management directors, First Responders, City/County officials, industry representatives, policy makers

Type of Prevention Secondary prevention with long term Primary

Justification The HSEES program must continue to increase its visibility within the state in order to maintain and improve the sensitivity and timeliness of the system. Providing more information on a more frequent basis to our crucial partners will serve as a reminder to them that the HSEES program needs their cooperation and support to continue.

Detailed Description of the Activity The newsletter will be printed in hard copy and placed on the MS-HSEES web page for download. The newsletter will be distributed in print to local emergency management directors, police and fire department personnel, city/county officials, industry representatives, and policy makers.

The newsletter will contain the previous years' data analysis. There will also be a "Spotlight" section that will focus on the first responder area of the HSEES program, including data on the number of events with responder victims, number of responder-victims, injuries, PPE, and other data elements relating to first responders.

Collaborators MSDH's Office of Public Relations

Measures of Effectiveness

- Document the number of newsletters distributed
- A brief section will be included in the newsletter asking readers to provide feedback to the HSEES Coordinator. This activity will be considered effective if feedback is received from 10% of those on the mailing list.
- Within six months of the newsletter's distribution, document a 5% increase in events reported and a 10% decrease in injuries among responders.
- Within one year of the newsletter's distribution, document a 10% decrease in the number of events.

Date of Completion December 31, 2004

Activity Four

Name of Activity Prepare and distribute fact sheets on paints/dyes and sulfuric acid.

Target Group Industry and other generators, First Responders

Type of Prevention Primary and secondary

Justification The paint/paint or coating NOS category and sulfuric acid category are among the top 5 substances released in Mississippi between 1995 and 2002. The top releases are a concern for all parties involved. They need to be brought to the awareness of generators (industrial and others) so steps can be made to reduce the quantity of events and to responders so procedures can be created/modified to ensure the safety of emergency personnel.

Detailed Description of Activity An information sheet for each chemical will be prepared and distributed to likely release generators (industry and others) and event responders. Information about the causes of past releases and the injuries sustained due to the releases will be presented in addition to general information about the substance.

For additional usage and awareness (i.e. “outreach”), each fact sheet will also be placed on the updated MS HSEES portion of the MSDH website for access by the general public and other interested parties.

Collaborators None

Measures of Effectiveness

- Document the number of fact sheets distributed.
- If feasible, document the number of times the fact sheets are downloaded from the HSEES website.
- A reduction of 5% in the quantity of releases involving these two substances OR a reduction of 5% in the quantity of injuries sustained in events associated with these two substances during the six months following distribution of these fact sheets will demonstrate the effectiveness of each fact sheet.

Date of Completion November 30, 2004

Activity #5 (Activity #3 from 2003 POA plan)**

Develop and distribute an annual newsletter for the HSEES program. The newsletter will be printed in hard copy and placed on the MS-HSEES web page for download. The newsletter will be distributed to local emergency management directors, police and fire department personnel, city/county officials, and/or industry representatives by November 30, 2003. (Extension requested through January 31, 2004.)

Justification

The HSEES program must increase its visibility within the state in order to maintain and improve the sensitivity and timeliness of the system. Responses to the 1995 - 1997 HSEES Cumulative Report Survey show that local emergency management directors and other interested parties want more information on hazardous substance events. Providing more information on a more frequent basis to these crucial partners will serve as a reminder to them that the HSEES program needs their cooperation and support to continue.

In the newsletter, there will be a "Spotlight" section. This section will highlight a particular geographic region with a high number of events, interesting events, or other timely information utilizing data from 1995 - 2002. Other portions of the newsletter will include summary statistics for the entire state.

Measures of Effectiveness

- Document the number of newsletters distributed.
- A brief section (1-2 questions) will be included in the newsletter asking readers to respond to the HSEES Coordinator by e-mail, fax number, or telephone to provide feedback on the usefulness of the newsletter.

This activity will be considered effective if at least 5% of those who receive the newsletter provide some sort of feedback to the HSEES Coordinator.

****Note: Activity 5 and its accompanying Logic Model were copied verbatim from the approved 2003 POA Plan and Logic Model for Activity #3.**